

brigades of the existing militia began to wreak vengeance and havoc.

Every day you pick up the paper, what do you read about in Baghdad? You read about 2, 12, 14, 50 Sunnis found bound and gagged and shot in the head. You read of death squads.

On this floor, a year and a half ago, I warned that the police department in Iraq was not being organized and was essentially becoming a group of death squad people, dominated by the sectarian groups.

What has our military told us now? They told us just that, just that. And what has happened now is our chief military guy on the ground, General Casey, says we have to radically reform the police. And he calls 2006: the year of the police. The year of the police—a tacit acknowledgment they have been a vehicle of dividing Iraq in sectarian ways rather than one of uniting Iraq.

Read today's papers—the New York Times, the Washington Post, the LA Times. What are you reading? You are reading now that members of the Iraqi Army are refusing to be deployed outside the areas from which they come.

The election on December 15—and I came to this floor afterward—it was heralded as this great democratic movement. What was it? Ninety percent of the Iraqis who voted on December 15 for a new Iraq voted for sectarian or ethnic parties. If you look at the results, it was a call for, effectively, the thing we do not want—division and partition. That is what it was. Only 10 percent of the votes cast in Iraq on December 15 were for non-sectarian, nonethnic parties or candidates.

So much for this notion that there is this nonsectarian oasis that exists in Iraq that we can now drink from in order to unite Iraq.

So I say to my colleagues, the proposal I have come forward with is, I believe, the only reasonable way in which to guarantee there is not a division of Iraq, that there is not partitioning. My proposal calls for a strong central government controlling all of the revenues, all the resources, all the oil revenues, controlling a united army, and in charge of border security and foreign policy.

But what it does is what we did, in part, in Bosnia in the Dayton Accords. It gives the sectarian areas breathing room. It does not insist that the central government and the Parliament dictate to the people in the Sunni area, for example, what their laws on marriage should be, what their laws on divorce and property settlement would be, any more than we allow the Federal Government to tell the people of Mississippi or the State of Washington or the State of Delaware what those laws would be. That is not division.

I remind everybody, what did we do? We won a Revolutionary War, but we could not get a consensus among the 13 Colonies to have a strong, united central Government, so we developed the Articles of Confederation. It took us 13

years to have our Philadelphia moment. It took us 13 years.

Let me go back to Bosnia and continue that analogy. The Dayton Accords called for the establishment of a place called the Republika Srpska. Remember, Serbians within Bosnia-Herzegovina had their own republic, were allowed to keep their army, allowed to keep their military, and three Presidents were elected under the Constitution—a Serbian President, a Bosniak President, and a Croat President. That was necessary to keep this place from splitting and splintering. There was no possibility you would get them all on the same page, in the same box, after the ethnic cleansing that had taken place.

What is happening now in Bosnia-Herzegovina? Now they are rewriting their Constitution. The Republika Srpska is ready to give up their status, give up their military, as well as move from three Presidents to one. Why? They want to become part of Europe. They want to become part of Europe and benefit economically. That is why we needed to give them breathing room.

My proposal does not do a single thing that the existing Constitution does not contemplate in Iraq. And my proposal requires—requires—as a precondition the establishment of the very government that is being established right now. But it goes beyond that. As our Ambassador said to us, down at the White House, in the teleconference with the President and about six Senators and the members of the war Cabinet of the President—he said: Mr. President—I am paraphrasing—we first have to establish this government. Then we need a program. The government needs a program.

Essentially, what my proposal calls for are the outlines of a program, a program whereby the Sunnis are guaranteed a piece of the economic pie.

Now, people would say: Joe, why? And I have run this by at least a half a dozen Iraqi leaders in Iraq—Sunni, Shia, and Kurds—and it ranges from “not sure” to “supportive.”

Why? What has changed? Here is what has changed. This is how the ground has shifted. No. 1, there is now sectarian violence, and ethnic cleansing is underway already now.

Secondly, the Sunnis no longer think there is any possibility of them controlling the central government and all of Iraq any longer. They have given up that notion. They know it is not possible. Some diehard Baathists and terrorists still think that. But the vast majority of the Sunni leadership knows that is not in the cards. That is not where they were 8 months ago.

Now, what happened with regard to the Shia? The Shia now know they can be the dominant political party in Iraq. But they have also figured out, in the last 3 months—they have had, as we Catholics say, their own epiphany. And what was their epiphany? It is that they know they cannot control the in-

surgents. They know there is nothing they are going to be able to do in the foreseeable future to keep their mosques, the oil wells, and infrastructure from being blown up.

The Kurds. What has happened in the last 3 months with the Kurds? The Kurds value, above all else, their autonomy. They really want independence, but they value their autonomy. Why would they be part of this deal to give up part of the revenues to guarantee the Sunnis have revenues? A simple reason, folks: They have now decided there is no possibility of them occupying Kirkuk and being independent in a country that blows apart. Why? The Turks will take them out. The Turks will take them out. The Turkoman, the Syrians, and others who live in Kirkuk—the Turks will not allow the Kurds in Iraq to essentially have an independent state if a civil war breaks out.

So they have all figured it out. But they do not know quite how to fix it. You may say: Biden, isn't it presumptuous for you to tell them how to fix it?

Quite frankly, every move forward of late has been from an American initiative.

Well, I heard the White House criticize my plan, saying we ought to let the Iraqis do it. Well, how do they explain the fact that the President of the United States got on the phone and told the Iraqis: “Jaafari is out”? How do they explain the fact of noninterference with the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense getting on a plane and going over to Iraq and saying: “Jaafari is out”?

Do you call that meddling? I call it meddling, but a rational meddling, a rational meddling for their own well-being and, long term, ours.

And I might add, who was it that insisted that the Constitution, that was clearly going to be voted on overwhelmingly, be amended at the last minute to allow further amendment? Our Ambassador? He did it. Why? It made sense in order to get the Sunnis into the election.

Because they were not ready to buy in if they knew this Constitution was cast in stone. That is nice meddling.

What I am proposing does not even approach that. What I am proposing is what everybody knows has to be dealt with in Iraq; and that is, you have to figure a way that the Sunnis have some resources.

Now, if you are a Sunni, and you have been able to get a new government here, where you get a few people who are in the government, what do you think happens in a parliament, where 60 percent of the parliament is dominated by the Shia when it comes to distributing resources in the central government? Do you think you are going to get many hospitals built in the Sunni region? Do you think you are going to get many roads built? Do you think you are going to get many wells dug? These folks are not stupid.